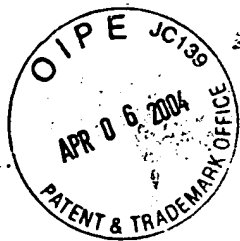


00862.022011.



PATENT APPLICATION

2626

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)
: Examiner: M. Nguyen
MINORU KUSAKABE et al.)
: Group Art Unit: 2626
Application No.: 09/671,623)
:
Filed: September 28, 2000)
:
For: IMAGE PROCESSING)
:
APPARATUS AND METHOD,)
:
AND STORAGE MEDIUM) April 5, 2004

RECEIVED

APR 07 2004

Technology Center 2600

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.56, Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner's attention to JP 11-041446, which is listed on the attached Form PTO-1449 and of which a copy is enclosed.

This document was cited during prosecution of a Japanese patent application corresponding to the above U.S. application. A copy of a Japanese Office Action, which is dated January 30, 2004, is enclosed.

U.S. Published Application No. 2001/0043341 claims priority from the same basic Japanese application as that of JP 11-041446. Accordingly, a copy of this published application is enclosed and it is also listed on Form PTO-1449.

Also cited in the Japanese Office Action was JP 5-301380, which was cited in the above-identified application in an Information Disclosure Statement filed January 10, 2003. Accordingly, JP 5-301380 is not being cited herein.

An English-language abstract for JP 11-041446 is enclosed. A concise explanation of relevance for this document is believed to be provided by the English-language abstract.

The Examiner is urged to study this information in its entirety and to form an independent determination of the materiality of the information to the claimed invention. Additionally, the Examiner is requested to indicate that this information has been considered by initialing the appropriate portion of Form PTO-1449.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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